

## **When Fifteen Times Four Equals One Hundred and Four (By Now Much, Much More): A Politico-Mathematical-Poetical Riddle**

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Good Luck!: A Prologue.

My aspirational mantra is no longer

Fight when you can

Take flight when you must

Flow like a dream

In the Phoenix we trust!

It's now:

Right to Life

Right to Arms

Must have on your Lucky Charms.

Praise the dawn

Save the Unborn

Everyone else...

Just learn to MOURN!

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Seems like every year I feel compelled to post my anti-automatic weapons for lay public consumption poetic rant. Of course, another mass murder, or two, or three... may be the source of my outrage! Here's the note for the original post in 2016. Bob, what happened... "The Times Don't Seem to Be Changing". Well, perhaps they are, but damn, seems for the worse. In the last ten days, Buffalo, Laguna Beach, today, Uvalde High School, TX, and I'm sure I'm missing a few. Below is my original intro and poetic parody written in 2016, "triggered" by the killing of dozens of people in the Orlando Night Club. Then another political lyric to the tune of the folk classic, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone". Peace and Protest. Mark Gorkin, The Stress Doc.

Like so many, I had a paradoxical mix of reactions to the Orlando mass killing: 1) first I was startled and sickened, and 2) I quickly sealed over; just another day, week, or month in the US of A. But as my anger smoldered, I read something that revealed a common thread. Then my brain came up with an ironic twist, ala '60s Harvard physicist, pianist, and political-satirical lyricist, Tom Lehrer. Initially, the mathematical riddle may prove somewhat confusing...but, please, bear with my little irony. To say any more would spoil the game!

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Warning: This verse may be hazardous to the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment addicted and rigidly constitutionally-impaired!

It's time for a lesson

Today's times table session:

When does 15 x 4

Equal one hundred and four?

Do I have your attention?

It's a life and death question.

AR(e) you ready to play havoc with me?

Here's a clue: go waste the "e parentheses".

Okay, to solve this critical problem

Sing the fiery national anthem

Shout that "Red BULL" slogan: Go ahead...Make My Day!

Of course, bow down to the new guard - the NRA.

Now, putting two letters in front of 15

Makes you more than Clint "lean-and-MEAN".

I gave you a hint, a few lines above:

Enough of this hippie '60s peace and love!

Perhaps I've been too clever by half

Ready to give this game-poem the shaft?

But wait...just kill the (e), grab that AR

Now you can do damage from near and afar.

AR is tactical

Who needs an ARmory

AR is radical

You are your own ARmy.

AR is surgical

Can rip open an ARtery.

AR is mystical

Crazed crusader ARTistry.

For AR alone seems but a trifle

But AR-15...makes an ASSAULT RIFLE!

AR + XM<sup>1</sup> and all types in between

You too can be a mass murder machine.

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<sup>1</sup>XM - BushmsterXM15 was the automatic weapon used in the Aurora, CO killings.

Now I said 4 but who's keeping score?  
In fact...46 mass shootings since 2004<sup>2</sup>.  
While religious terror is in the design  
But so too VTech and, of course, Columbine.

But from our four...oh what liberal furor  
Starting with Newtown and then Aurora.  
A workplace party in San Bernadino  
A gay nightclub in Disney's Orlando.  
(Oh yes, that black church in Carolina).

The Second Amend is starting to trend  
We all have a right to buy a "best friend?"<sup>3</sup>  
With a cool option for the street hunting scene  
A high-capacity killer magazine!

15 x 4 may not equal sixty  
When 15 x 4 totals all those dead bodies.  
So when is the next rapture of wrath?  
15 x 4...Just do the math!

AR is tactical  
Who needs an ARmory  
AR is radical  
You are your own ARmy.  
AR is surgical  
Can rip open an ARtery.  
AR is mystical  
Crazed crusader ARTistry.  
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<sup>2</sup>2004 - According to June 16, 2016, "Make It Stop: Boston Globe tweets every mass shooting victim since 2004" (when the assault weapons ban expired), there have been 47 mass shootings and 411 people killed; another news source cited 46 shootings.

<sup>3</sup>"Best friend" – AR-15 has been called "the mass murderer's best friend"